

U.S. PATENT APPLICATION

Title: EASY-TO-FIND REMOTE CONTROL FOR TELEVISION OR OTHER
DEVICES

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EASY-TO-FIND REMOTE CONTROL FOR TELEVISION OR OTHER DEVICES

FIELD OF INVENTION

(0001) The field of this invention is television systems. More specifically, this invention involves televisions with remote controls.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

(0002) Televisions with remote controls exist.

(0003) Beeper locator devices exist to locate items. Some of these devices have a hand held activator that activates the beeper by a wireless signal. The beeper locator device is attachable to an item that someone often loses and wants to find. The beeper is attachable to the item by an adhesive strip or velcro. The beeper is powered by its own internal battery. The beeper locator may be, for example, attached to keys, a mobile phone, or a television remote control. When the activator is activated, the beeper is made to beep, sending out an audio signal that is used to locate the lost item. To find the desired item by activating the beeper, one must first find the activator. The activator may be lost in the same manner as the desired item may be lost.

(0004) Wireless phones exist that use a handset that wirelessly communicates telephone calls to and from a docking station. The docking station is wired to the telephone land line system. Models of wireless phones exist with an activator button installed in the docking station. Pressing the activator button sends a signal to a beeper installed in the handset.

Activating the activator causes the beeper in the handset to send out an audio signal that can be followed to find the handset.

(0005) A problem that is not addressed by the prior art is the problem of finding a lost television remote control, without first finding a separate activator device (which in itself may also be lost), and without first attaching a beeper device to the outside of the remote control, after purchase.

(0006) Television remote controls are often lost in the room containing the television. The remote control may be lost under seat cushions, on the floor under furniture, under newspapers, under fluffy pet cats, or elsewhere. This can be a considerable irritant to the frustrated remote user.

SUMMARY

(0007) The summary and abstract herein are intended to describe some embodiments of the present invention. They do not encompass each and every embodiment, and may not encompass the full scope of the claims. The summary and abstract herein should not be construed as limiting the present invention or the claims.

(0008) An embodiment of the present invention for the first time includes a television and a remote control for the television, with an activator installed in the television at the time of manufacture, and with a locator signal generator, which may be a beeper, a flashing light, or other device, installed in the remote control at the time of manufacture. Using the activator in the television will activate the locator signal generator in the remote control. The resulting signal, which may be a sound, or a flashing light, or both, or another signal, enables the user to

locate the remote control. The activator wirelessly communicates to the signal generator to activate the generator.

(0009) Other embodiments of the present invention may involve a locator signal generator installed in any remote control for any controlled device, with the activator for the locator signal generator being installed in the device controlled by the remote control, such as a radio, a CD player, a VCR player, a DVD player, a PC, a robot, a garage door, an appliance, or others.

(0010) The present invention has a competitive advantage in the marketplace over conventional televisions with conventional remote controls, because the present invention would for the first time offer a television with an unlosable, easy-to-find remote control. With the present invention, the user will never again be frustrated by the question, "Where is the remote?"

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

(0011) Figure 1 shows an embodiment of the invention with a television 101, a remote control 103 for the television, and an activator 102 in the television for the locator signal generator 104, 105 in the remote control.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

(0012) In one embodiment of the present invention, depicted in Figure 1, the television 101 has installed within it an activator 102 for a remote control 103 for the television 101. Using the activator by pressing the activator button 102 causes a wireless signal 107 to be transmitted to the remote control 103 from the television 101. The remote control 103 contains a locator

signal generator, which may be a sound generator 104, a blinking light 105 or both, or another signal generator.

(0013) The wireless signal 107 may be a low-energy short-range radio signal, an infrared light signal, a high frequency sound signal, or other wireless signal. The activator 102 may be powered by the same power source as the television 101, which may be powered by access to the electric power grid, or by an internal battery, or otherwise. The activator 102 may be configured to be always on, in the sense that it may always have power and be used at any time to find the remote, regardless of whether the television is on or off. Alternatively, the activator 102 may be powered and useable only when the television is on.

(0014) The locator signal generator 104, 105 may be powered from the power source of the remote control 103, preferably batteries.

(0015) In one embodiment, the remote control 103 will have both a sound generator 104 and light 105. In one embodiment, the user can select that either or both of the locator signal generators 104, 105 are to be used. The selection may be made by flipping a three-position indicator switch 108 on the remote 103 to select the sound generator 104, the light generator 105, or both sound 104 and light 105. The signal generator selector switch 108 may alternatively be installed on the television 101 rather than on the remote control 103. The signal generator selector switch 108 and the locator activator button 102 may be mechanical, electro-mechanical, solid state, heat sensitive, pressure sensitive, or otherwise.

(0016) One skilled in the art will appreciate that the present invention can be practiced by embodiments other than the described embodiments. The described embodiments are

presented for purposes of illustration and not limitation, and the present invention is limited only by the claims that follow.